

OLL FILE Leg  
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29 October 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT                    Briefing for SSCI Staff on CIA proposed  
                             tuition assistance program

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1. At the request of Gary Chase and Dan Finn, the Agency provided a briefing on its proposed tuition assistance program. On October 24, 1985, a briefing was conducted at SSCI committee offices. Attending were [redacted] (DD/OP/E), [redacted] (OTE), [redacted] (OGC) and [redacted] (OLL). From Committee Staff, Gary Chase, Dan Finn and Charles Battaglia were present.

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2. After introductions, [redacted] was called upon to give a detailed presentation about the tuition assistance program. Emphasis was placed upon our need for students having an engineering and science background. We have fallen into a competitive disadvantage compared to private sector recruitment. Private companies offer higher salaries and superior benefit packages. Other government agencies already have tuition assistance programs. The best the Agency has to offer is a work-study program, which has been used as a key tool in minority and woman recruitment. Another positive factor in the work-study program is that it promotes geographical balance in the CIA work force. Adding a tuition assistance benefit, would enhance the program and improve our competitive position in recruiting.

3. Most of the concern for the SSCI staff focused on whether the program would be used for "operational" purposes, rather than purely a talent search. In the view of Gary Chase,

[redacted]

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4. Assurances were given that the program was never meant to be used for operational purposes. Its sole purpose is to hire persons having critical skills, primarily in engineering

and the sciences. Most of the students would go into the DDI and DDS&T. All of the tuition assistance candidates will be drawn from the work-study program and all have clearances. When a student returns to the campus after a summer work period at the Agency, he is given no operational tasking whatsoever. There is no official contact by the agency when the student is back at school.

STAT 5. Staff was also interested in the methods of the recruitment process. [ ] explained how he visited campuses throughout the country and spoke to university officials and students about the Agency program. He briefed students, professors and officials only with the permission of the university. All contacts were open and public in much the same way that other public and private agencies recruited. At this point Dan Finn noted that the son of a defendant in a criminal case involving the CIA (U.S. v. Rewald) was recruited to go to the University of Hawaii for spotting and assessing foreign students. Exposure of these operational efforts caused embarrassment for the Agency and drew criticism of Senators from Hawaii. Dan Finn wanted a commitment from us that the tuition assistance would not be used for such conduct.

STAT 6. After the university placement office and hierarchy are briefed, students are then made available for the various programs that recruiters have briefed university officials on. Dan Finn questioned whether we ensure that top officials of the university are made aware of Agency recruiting efforts on campus. Dan Finn then made reference about a problem at another university where a low level official of the school was notified but not the top officials. Mr. Battaglia wanted to know how well the CIA program was received on campus. Both [ ] told of the overwhelming enthusiasm by students. Agency personnel spoke to standing-room-only crowds. Presently, there are 250 undergraduates and about 65 graduate students in the program. We also noted that other government agencies have student tuition programs: NSA, Naval Weapons Research, Health Service Scholarship and Indian Health Scholarship programs.

STAT 7. More information was asked for by Mr. Battaglia about the contractual commitment that the student makes to work for the Agency after graduation, if the student receives tuition assistance. Moreover, how would the Agency collect in the event that the student did not live up to his agreement. In answer to those questions, [ ] said that the student signed a letter of intent which evidences a contractual commitment. This is the most common method of making such a commitment in competing programs. If the student abandons his commitment, a reasonable repayment schedule is worked out so as not to impose too much of an immediate financial burden.

8. Discussion then returned to whether this program was intended for operational use. More assurances were given that all aspects of the program were overt and non-operational. CIA presence on the campus is public and every effort is made to inform the placement office and university higher ups of our presence. As matter of fact the publicity is an aid to recruitment.

9. SSCI staff suggested that we send a letter to the Senate and House Intelligence Committees establishing for the record that: (1) the tuition assistance is not in any way intended for operations, [redacted]

[redacted] (3) that the Agency make every effort to notify top university officials of CIA tuition assistance recruiting efforts, (4) that when students return to the campus after a work period at the agency, they are given no operational tasking ( i.e. spotting & assesing ), and (5) include other positive aspects of the program in the letter, such as its use for minority and woman recruiting and the achievement of geographical balance in the Agency work force.

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provide information to answer all other matters. Our goal is to make the plan available for this semester.

10. All committee staff expressed support for the program when the meeting concluded. While a member of HPSCI staff was invited to this briefing, no one showed up. We will probably have to repeat this briefing to HPSCI. I will arrange for that briefing.

Deputy Chief, Legislation Division  
Office of Legislative Liaison

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